

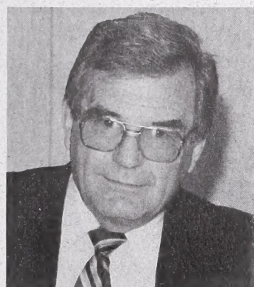
IN OUR BACKYARD

JAN - 2 1991



UPDATE FROM THE ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

WASTE MANAGEMENT: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY



*R. Lorne Mick
President and CEO
Alberta Special Waste
Management Corporation*

Recent events have confirmed the wisdom of Alberta's decision, in 1979, to establish a facility and a system to deal with hazardous wastes. The establishment of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation in 1984, and the opening of the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre in 1987 were significant achievements of which we can all be proud.

They were all the more remarkable since the amount of such wastes generated in the province is much less than other parts of the country and far below that of other parts of the world, where waste accumulations are approaching crisis proportions.

It is tempting, therefore, for Albertans to react somewhat smugly to the problems such

areas are experiencing, and to assume that since their own management system is operational – they can sit back and leave others to fend for themselves.

Such an attitude is misguided, to say the least. In our interdependent global village, there are no favoured exceptions. Just as we all share the convenience of chemical detergents, plastic computers, aluminum windows and composite cars, we all share the responsibility for accommodating these products in a safe and healthful world environment.

The creation of physical systems for dealing with wastes is just a part of the task. Generating public awareness of the problem is equally, if not more, important. At ASWMC, we're actively involved in information programs at all levels, from the kindergarten to the boardroom.

This newsletter is part of that process. We'll be using it to bring you up to date on activities and issues in special waste management. And we'll offer it as a vehicle to publicize Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Drug Round-Ups and Waste Recycling Days.

In the meantime, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Help Show there's a Better Way

This is the first in a continuing series of newsletters from the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation intended to keep Albertans informed on topics related to the effective management of special wastes in our "backyard."

"Special" wastes are those which, because of their chemical composition, require careful management and special treatment. Improperly handled, they become hazardous, threatening human health, destroying vital living organisms, and endangering our environment.

Through this and other information programs, ASWMC is seeking the cooperation of concerned individuals, groups and municipalities in the common-sense handling of such materials to protect and preserve the world we share.

Your input is a necessary part of this program and your suggestions are welcomed. Meanwhile, you are encouraged to recirculate these newsletters or freely reprint any item (in context) in your own publications. Together, we can show that, "Alberta has a better way".

September 1989
Volume 1
Number 1

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"In Our Backyard" is a bi-monthly publication produced by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. Its role is to keep Albertans updated on issues and solutions in hazardous waste management in their province.

ASWMC welcomes your comments or suggestions.

Write, call or fax:
Irene Chanin
Vice President,
Communications ASWMC
(see page 4 for address and telephone number)



Alberta
Special Waste
Management
Corporation
AN ALBERTA CROWN CORPORATION

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

Practice the "Four R's"

How to cut taxes, create jobs, extend farm land, save trees and improve the environment

It sounds like the ultimate election promise. Yet it's an achievable reality. If we all take the time to practice the Four R's of recycling everyday wastes (Reduction, Reuse, Recycling and Recovery), we can not only conserve our precious natural resources—but improve our economy in the bargain.

Every year, the average Canadian throws away some 500 kilograms of garbage at home, work or school. For a family of four, that's about two metric tonnes annually – or enough to fill your own garbage truck. As you might expect, getting rid of all that waste is an expensive business. We spend some \$1.5 billion every year disposing of our self-made trash – and who-knows-how-much more on countering the damage to our environment.

The most simple and expedient alternative to the problem caused by single-use, throwaway products is to follow the Four R's—at home, school, office or workplace. It takes very little time to develop good disposal habits—yet the benefits are enormous.

▲ Become your own household waste control board by separating recyclable items. Check Page 4 ("Don't throw it out!") for hints on how to

make good use of your garbage – while cutting disposal costs in your community. You might even pick up a dollar or two in the process!

▲ Do help preserve our diminishing forests by recycling paper and paper products. By contributing to a paper recycling program, you help create Canadian jobs and opportunities for Canadian companies. At present, Canadian paper mills are actually importing about 500,000 metric tonnes of waste paper from the United States annually. That's an order than can be filled here in Canada once we have sufficient paper recycling programs.

▲ Start something at the office. An office recycling program is simple to start – and it could win you some kudos from the boss by saving the company some money and cutting your garbage bills.

▲ Say "No, Thanks" to that plastic bag. Every time you use a recyclable container instead of a plastic bag or metal can, you're reducing the amount of environmental pollution caused by refining and strip mining.

▲ Think of the benefits. By recycling, you provide

materials for new products. One family's yearly supply of newspapers can be recycled into nearly enough insulation for one house.

▲ Keep consumer prices down. Recycling helps lower product costs... keeps consumer prices in check. It takes less energy and less expense for manufacturers to produce products from recovered materials than to process new materials.

▲ Put land to better use. Every time you re-use or recycle a product, you're helping to preserve land. Most residential garbage is taken to large landfill sites which occupy land than can often be put to more productive use.

▲ Fight water pollution. Toxic waste improperly disposed of at landfill sites can endanger rivers, lakes and underground water tables through seepage.

▲ Preserve jobs. By protecting

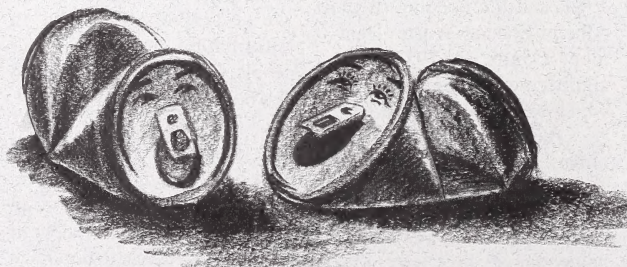
Alberta's natural environment through re-use and recycling, you're helping to preserve jobs in tourism, fishing, forestry, agriculture and other environment-dependent sectors.

▲ Lower taxes. Through recycling and re-use, you reduce the costs of waste disposal and treatment—and help keep municipal taxes in check.

▲ Help others... help yourself. By giving unneeded clothing, footwear and household items to local collection centres and second-hand stores, you're extending the life of still-useful products – and helping others at the same time.

▲ Save valuable energy. When a tonne of printing and writing paper is produced using 83% recyclable waste paper instead of 100% wood pulp, there is an estimated 43% saving in energy.

SHIRLEY McCAN



"IN MY NEXT LIFE,
I WANT TO COME BACK AS A PORSCHE!"



Above: One of the many community study groups which visited the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre in recent months.

Ryley Visits Swan Hills

Throughout Alberta, progressive communities are recognizing the need for new systems of waste management. One particularly far-sighted administration is that of the Village of Ryley which has an active Citizens' Advisory Committee committed to this area of environmental protection. The following edited account is reprinted with the kind permission of *The Tofield Mercury*.

Recently, several citizens of the Village of Ryley and the surrounding area enjoyed a unique and very educational experience. They were hosted by The Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation on a tour of the Swan Hills Special Waste Treatment Centre.

The tour came about as a direct result of a public meeting, held in the Ryley Hall back in November.

At that time, Village Council presented the people of Ryley with the possibility of

a Waste Transfer Station being sited within the Village. The citizens at the meeting voted 87 per cent in favour of council looking into this possibility.

As a result of the favourable vote, a Citizens' Advisory Committee, made up of a total cross section of the population, was set up to act as a study group. The group includes young people, seniors, males, females, business people, labourers and professionals.

The group has been meeting to study all aspects of siting a transfer station at Ryley. Members are raising questions, and using various means at their disposal to find the answers. If the study group finds that the siting of a Transfer Station is a feasible project to pursue, it will make its recommendations to Village Council, and will make its finding known to the general public.

The tour of the Swan Hills Treatment Centre, and a transfer

site in Calgary, were part of the study process. Several other communities, including Redwater and Onoway, are also in the process of study, and had toured the Swan Hills facility just prior to Ryley's study group.

During the process of study, one thing which became evident to the committee was the need in the community for a Toxic Round-up.

Toxic wastes are substances which, if not properly disposed of, can harm people, animals or plants. They include such things as solvents, old paint, light ballasts, aerosol containers, cleaners, pesticides, and other household and yard products.

The advisory committee, in conjunction with the local fire department, is in the process of planning a Toxic Round-up for Saturday, June 24.

This is the day or event that allows all citizens to bring in their toxic waste to be sorted, labelled, and sent to Swan Hills for proper disposal. Ryley is only one of 66 communities in Alberta this year that are planning Toxic Round-ups.

The Ryley study group is very excited about these figures, because they indicate that people are becoming increasingly aware of special wastes and the need to treat them properly instead of dumping them unlawfully.

The study group is very close to making its findings public and looks forward to distributing information about the Toxic Round-up as soon as all the details have been set.

(Ryley's June 24 Toxic Round-up proved to be a great success with some 14 barrels – or 2.3 tonnes – of special wastes being collected for treatment and disposal. For information on how to organize a similar Round-up in your community, call Tom Thackeray at ASWMC. Telephone numbers overleaf.)

Don't throw it out!

A great part of your everyday garbage consists of items that are potentially re-useable or recyclable. Paper, glass, metals, lubricating oils, cloth, plastics, rubber and organic materials... all have a potentially extended life. You can reduce your garbage and benefit yourself by separating your garbage and sorting out items for recycling.

- ▲ Save newspapers and magazines and take them to a collection depot. There's probably one quite close to you. Check with your local administration for the address.
- ▲ Take cans and bottles to your local container depot. Look under "Recycling Centres" in your Yellow Pages for a location near you.
- ▲ Create a compost heap in your garden. Waste food products, grass clippings and leaves can create a valuable fertilizer for your lawn or vegetable patch.
- ▲ Take a second look. Before discarding anything, consider if it can be used again for the same purpose or put to another use.
- ▲ Get involved. Take an interest in an often overlooked area of modern life. Educate your co-workers and your family to the dangers of poor waste management and the advantages of recycling. Lobby your local administration to commence a recycling program. You'll be helping to show the world that there is a better way.

ALTERNATIVES

Many of the special wastes that are now a potential threat to the environment were once friendly, familiar products sitting on the supermarket shelf. Bleach, oven cleaner, disinfectant, silver polish... all exemplify the useful household chemicals that can cause problems unless disposed of properly. There is, however, another option to expensive special disposal. This is to use non-toxic alternatives that are not only effective but relatively inexpensive:

	Commercial product may contain	Non-toxic alternative
Drain Cleaner	sodium or potassium hydroxide, sodium hypochlorite, hydrochloric acid, petroleum distillates	mix of 1/4 cup baking soda, boiling water and 2oz. vinegar
Floor & Furniture Polish	diethylene glycol, petroleum distillates, nitrobenzene	1 part lemon juice mixed with 2 parts olive or vegetable oil
Mothballs	naphthalene paradichlorobenzene	cedar chips, newspapers or - nicest of all - lavender blossoms

If you know of similar non-toxic alternatives to household products, we'd like to hear from you. Send your suggestions to: The Editor, "In Our Backyard", c/o ASWMC, at the address shown in the right hand column.

Community Participation in Waste Management

A unique opportunity to learn about hazardous waste management at a community level is available to Alberta municipalities and regions.

"In Our Backyard" is a community action kit compiled by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation with the cooperation of experts in industry, education, and

community planning. The Alberta-oriented kits contain a study guide, slides, videotapes and reference materials.

Study groups are composed of 15-20 individuals from a cross-section of the community, including small business, education, health care, emergency response, industry, agriculture, municipal

government and other community groups.

A team of consultants from the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, who were involved in developing the material, lead three evening sessions with the local study group.

The study sessions provide information on how local government and community members can take responsibility for special wastes produced in their communities. People come to understand the regulations pertaining to waste management and how those regulations and their enforcement provide protection for human health and the environment.

Groups also have an opportunity to visit the Alberta Special Waste Treatment Centre near Swan Hills as well as a fully operational regional transfer station.

At the end of the third session, the study group composes a report with recommendations to present to the local council. In some communities the study groups have shared the report with the community at large in a public meeting. Recommendations resulting from these reports have influenced the establishment and safe operation of special waste facilities in various communities.

As of October, 1989, participating communities were Onoway, Redwater, Lethbridge, Ryley (see article this issue), City and County of Grande Prairie, and the County of Lac St. Anne. Groups are being organized in Innisfail, Olds, Edson, Hinton, Drayton Valley, Fort McMurray, and High River.

For more information on how to form a study group in your community, contact the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. In Edmonton, phone 422-5029, or call toll-free, 1-800-272-8873.

CALL DIRECT:

▲ For information on:
• Hazardous Waste Management Programs in Alberta
• Toxic Round-up
• Community Study Groups
ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
1-800-272-8873
422-5029 (Edmonton)
428-9627 (Fax)

▲ For a directory of waste management companies in Alberta:
ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE SERVICES ASSOCIATION
424-6384 (Edmonton)

▲ For information on:
• Used Oil Program
• Recycling: Newspaper, Metals, Plastic, Clothing
RECYCLING BRANCH, ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT
427-5838 (Edmonton)
297-5923 (Calgary)

▲ To access the clearing house that puts potential users of waste materials in contact with waste producers:
ALBERTA WASTE MATERIALS EXCHANGE
450-5408 (Edmonton)

▲ To report an environmental emergency or register a complaint:
POLLUTION CONTROL DIVISION, ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT
1-800-222-6514

▲ For information on the transportation of dangerous goods:
ALBERTA PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES
1-800-272-9600

ALBERTA SPECIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
900, 10909 Jasper Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 3L9



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